GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4807
ANSWERED ON:30.03.2017
Illegal Mining
Vellaigounder Shri Elumalai

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has started using its eyes in the sky to check illegal mining and is to allow the public a peek into the system through web based applications soon to turn the common man into mine guardians and if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether mining surveillance system is likely to trigger an alarm whenever there is an instance of illegal mining outside permitted areas and if so, the details thereof; and
(c) the further steps to be taken to check the said activities?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR POWER, COAL, NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MINES (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a) to (c): Yes, Mining Surveillance System (MSS) has been developed to use space technology for monitoring illegal mining activities of major minerals in the country. The lease areas are superimposed on satellite imagery and excavation activities within 500 metres buffer zone of the lease area are monitored. If any excavation within this buffer zone is observed, then the same is flagged off as trigger and sent to respective State Government for its field verification.

A user-friendly mobile app has also been launched for the use of general public, whereby if any unauthorised mining activity is observed by the citizen, she/he can raise a complaint of such activity through the mobile app. The citizen's complaint is then forwarded to the respective State Government for taking appropriate action in the matter. 296 triggers generated under MSS across the country have been sent to the respective State Governments for field verification.

The incidence of illegal mining is reportedly higher in case of minor minerals. The MMDR Act, 1957 devolves on the States the full responsibility for the administration of minor minerals. The various provisions of the MMDR Act lay down the framework for framing of rules & regulations for administration of minor minerals by the States. Ministry of Mines has suggested to the States to use MSS for monitoring illegal mining of minor minerals, also.
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